

# Ma. Germ Peril Cited By Expert

By JOHN F. ALLEN

There is excellent evidence that some kind of life—quite possibly intelligent beings—exists on Mars, and perhaps on Venus.

Earthlings need not wait too long to find out, for the probability is that men and women will be landing on the two planets within 10 to 15 years.

## Stanford Doctor

But those who make the trip may never come home: they and the generations they breed may be forever exiled lest they bring back to earth strange bacteria which could wipe out mankind in a sudden raging plague.

These are not the imaginings of a science fiction writer but the sober opinions of one of the world's best and most respected geneticists, Dr. Joshua Lederberg, winner of the 1958 Nobel Prize in medicine and head of Stanford Medical School's department of genetics.

## Visits Soon

Doctor Lederberg, 34, made his heady and frightening predictions yesterday before the First International Space Science Symposium, at Nice, France, a meeting which has drawn top scientists from all over the world, including Russia and its satellites.

"There is very good evidence," Doctor Lederberg told his fellow scientists, "that life

(See PLANET.

Page 22, Column 3)

Allen's

PRESS CLIPPING BUREAU

Established 1888

SAN FRANCISCO

Los Angeles

Portland - Seattle

San Francisco, Calif.  
Examiner

(Cir. D. 250,132 - S. 503,369)

JAN 14 1960

# Planet: Germs on Mars May Be Too Perilous

(Continued from Page 1)

of some kind—whether intelligent or not—exists on Mars, and a possibility that the same is true of Venus.

"The probability that the first space expeditions to the planets will take place in 10 or 15 years does not mean that the travelers will necessarily come back," he added.

"Life on Mars and Venus may be in the form of foreign organisms which could contaminate the men and instruments landed from the earth, just as the planets would be contaminated by the earthmen.

"The return of a space expedition that would bring these foreign organisms back to earth might have disastrous consequences to our health, agriculture and economy.

## MANKIND FATE

"The fate of mankind could be at stake. Until we had all the information we needed in

detail we could hardly risk any other policy but a strict interdiction of the return of any craft or material whatsoever from the habitable planets."

In time, Doctor Lederberg said, scientists might work out 100 per cent effective decontamination procedures and the lonely planetary travelers—or their succeeding generations—could return.

"Succeeding generations," Doctor Lederberg suggested, "because it would be well to send along both men and women, to provide for the formation of a continuing colony in case return proves impossible.

## RUSS ROCKETS

At the same meeting another local Nobel Laureate, Chemist Harold C. Urey of the University of California, said he believed the promised Russian rocket firings in the Pacific are nothing to worry about.

"I think it's the Russian equivalent of Cape Canaveral," he said. "We've got to test out long range rockets over the ocean, and so do they."

Urey noted that when Moscow announced the coming tests last week, some Western scientists began speculation that the Soviet might have stolen another march on the United States by producing a nuclear-powered rocket.

## WE'RE SCARED

"If Blagonravov says the rockets are not nuclear-powered, I see no reason to disbelieve him," Urey said. "We're so frightened of the Russians we always think there's something special behind everything they do."

His reference was to Soviet Space Scientist Anatoly Blagonravov, who, at the same meeting denied that the rockets were to be nuclear-powered, that they will carry

nuclear warheads or that the Pacific trials—which may start in a few days—carry any pre-summit meeting political overtones.

The only reason for firing the rockets into mid-Pacific, Blagonravov said, "is the need to experiment with bigger and more powerful rockets over greater distances."

ARCHIVAL COPY